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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

MCLEAN, NEIL R

ART UNIT

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MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

02/29/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/615,903	Applicant(s) YAMAKAWA, TAKEHIRO	
	Examiner Neil R. McLean	Art Unit 2625	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 December 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 7 and 9-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 7 and 9-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Claims 1-6 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claims. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on 12/11/2007.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 7, 9-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sato et al. (US 6,351,625).

Regarding Claim 7: (currently amended)

Sato et al. discloses an image forming system comprising:

an attachment including a sheet feeding unit (e.g., **An original document feeder 100 is mounted on the image reader 200 as described in Column 10, lines 19-20**), and image reading means (e.g., **The image of the original is read out by a scanner unit 104 as described in Column 10, lines 31-32**) for feeding a manuscript sheet and an insert sheet (e.g., **sheets having images formed thereon and special sheets such as cover sheets in alignment into a single bundle of sheets without requiring a complicated operation by an operator, and with improved productivity as described in Column 1, lines 57-63**) for reading an image on the manuscript sheet and the insert sheet fed from the sheet feeding unit; and

an image forming apparatus main unit (**As shown in FIG. 1, the image forming apparatus according to the present embodiment is comprised of an image forming apparatus main body 10 as described in Column 10, lines 14-16**) attached to the attachment and having image forming means (e.g., **The sheet on which the toner image has been transferred is conveyed to a fixing unit 117, and the fixing unit 117 fixes the toner image to the sheet with heat and pressure as described in Column 11, lines 25-27**) for forming the image on a copy sheet wherein at least one of said image forming apparatus main unit and said attachment includes sheet determining means (**The original document feeder controller 101 controls the operation of the original document feeder 100 based on a command from the CPU circuit block 150 as described in Column 13, lines 13-19**) for determining whether a sheet fed from the sheet feeding unit is the manuscript sheet or the insert sheet, and

reading control means for controlling the image reading means to read the image only when the sheet determining means determines that the sheet is the manuscript sheet (**The program code or device which performs what is described in Column 3, lines 35-60; The conveyance path means conveying the special sheet fed from the special sheet feeding means to the receiving means, and controlling the post processing means to store the transfer material and the special sheet together in page order in the receiving means, by causing the special sheet to be temporarily halted on standby on the conveyance path means, and thereafter causing the special sheet and the transfer material to be conveyed to the receiving means and stored therein in page order).**

Regarding Claim 8: (canceled)

Regarding Claim 9: (currently amended)

An image forming system according to claim 7, wherein said sheet determining means includes operation means for selecting (**The sheet set sensor 910 detects whether a special sheet or sheets are set on the tray 901 of the inserter 900 or not as described in Column 16, lines 54-56)** the manuscript sheet and the insert sheet among the sheets fed from the sheet feeding unit (**The inserter pre-sheet-feed operation in the step S4 of FIG. 23 is described with reference to FIG. 27, which is a flow chart showing the process of the inserter pre-sheet-feed operation in the step S4 of FIG. 23).**

Regarding Claim 10: (original)

An image forming system according to claim 7, wherein said attachment includes a sheet discharge unit for discharging the copy sheet with the image formed by the image forming means **(The sheet discharged from the printer 300 is fed to the folding unit 400. The folding unit 400 performs a folding operation to fold the sheet in the form of Z. For example, when the sheets have a A3 size or B4 size and execution of the folding operation is designated, the folding unit 400 performs the folding operation. Otherwise, the sheets discharged from the printer 300 are passed through the folding device 400 as they are, and fed to the finisher 500. An inserter 900 is provided in the finisher 500 to feed special sheets such as cover sheets to be inserted into sheets having images formed thereon as described in Column 12, lines 55-65).**

Regarding Claim 11: (original)

A image forming system according to claim 7, wherein said attachment includes image data conversion means for reading the image on the manuscript sheet and converting the image into image data **(As shown in FIG. 4, the image signal controller 202 includes an image processing block 203 that converts the analog image signal from the image reader controller 201 into a digital signal, and performs various processing on this digital signal).**

Regarding Claim 12: (original)

An image forming system according to claim 7, wherein said attachment includes copy sheet feeding means for feeding the copy sheet to the image forming means **(e.g., A sheet is fed from a cassette 114 or 115, a manual paper feed unit 125 or a double-faced conveyance path 124. The fed sheet is conveyed to a space between the photosensitive drum 111 and a transfer unit 116 as described in Column 11, lines 15-24).**

Regarding Claim 13: (original)

An image forming system according to claim 7, wherein said sheet feeding unit includes a sheet feeding tray for receiving the manuscript sheet and the insert sheet, and sheet separating means for separating the manuscript sheet or the insert sheet one by one **(The branch A constitutes a branching point from a conveyance path which conveys sheets from the entrance roller pair 502 to the conveyance roller pair 503 as described in Column 15, lines 3-6).**

Regarding Claim 14: (original)

An image forming system according to claim 7, wherein said attachment includes a copy sheet discharge unit for discharging the copy sheet with the image formed by the image forming means **(The originals are guided along a curved path to be conveyed from the left onto a platen glass 102, and then through a moving original reading position to the right, and subsequently discharged to an external original discharging tray 112 as described in**

Column 10, lines 28-29), an insert sheet conveyance path for guiding the insert sheet fed from the sheet feeding unit to the copy sheet discharge unit, a manuscript sheet discharge unit for discharging the manuscript sheet fed from the sheet feeding unit, and a manuscript sheet conveyance path for guiding the manuscript sheet fed from the sheet feeding unit to the manuscript sheet discharge unit. **(In step S702 it is determined that the finisher start signal ceased to be generated, judging that the image formation in the printer 300 has been finished, the process proceeds to step S706, where the process waits until all the sheets are discharged onto the stack tray 700. When all the sheets have been discharged, the process proceeds to step S707 to stop the flapper 511, followed by terminating the present process as described in Column 24, lines 30-37).**

Regarding Claim 15: (original)

An image forming system according to claim 7, wherein said attachment includes a copy sheet discharge unit for discharging the copy sheet with the image formed by the image forming means, and a common conveyance path for guiding the manuscript sheet and the insert sheet fed from the sheet feeding unit to the copy sheet discharge unit **(The program code or device which performs what is described in Column 3, lines 35-60; The conveyance path means conveying the special sheet fed from the special sheet feeding means to the receiving means, and controlling the post processing means to store**

the transfer material and the special sheet together in page order in the receiving means, by causing the special sheet to be temporarily halted on standby on the conveyance path means, and thereafter causing the special sheet and the transfer material to be conveyed to the receiving means and stored therein in page order).

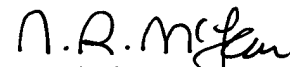
Conclusion

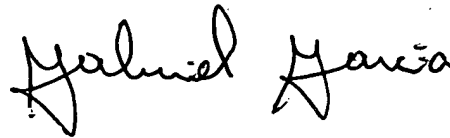
4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Conrad et al. (US Patent 5,272,511) discloses a sheet inserter that inserts special insert sheets into a continuous stream of sheets by overlaying the insert sheets with a corresponding sheet in the continuous stream of sheets. The insert sheet overlaying the corresponding sheet in the continuous stream of sheets is then conveyed with the corresponding sheet to a final destination where the sheets can be compiled into a stack.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Neil R. McLean whose telephone number is (571)270-1679. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 7:30AM-5:00PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David K. Moore can be reached on 571.272.7437. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Neil R. McLean
02/27/2008



• GABRIEL I. GARCIA
PRIMARY EXAMINER